

1 BEFORE THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

2 STATE OF WASHINGTON

3 JON RANKIN,)

4 Appellant,)

5 v.)

6 CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY,)

7 Respondent.)

Case No. ALLO-02-0006

ORDER OF THE BOARD FOLLOWING
HEARING ON EXCEPTIONS TO THE
DETERMINATIONS OF THE DIRECTOR

8
9 **Hearing on Exceptions.** Pursuant to RCW 41.64.060 and WAC 358-01-040, this appeal came on
10 for hearing before the Personnel Appeals Board, GERALD L. MORGEN, Vice Chair. The hearing
11 was held on October 1, 2002, at the Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Washington.
12 RENÉ EWING, Member, reviewed the record and participated in the decision in this matter.
13 WALTER T. HUBBARD, Chair, did not participate in the hearing or in the decision in this matter.

14
15 **Appearances.** Appellant Jon Rankin was present and represented himself *pro se*. Dennis Defa,
16 Assistant Director of Human Resources, represented Respondent Central Washington University
17 (CWU).

18 **Background.** On June 29, 2001, Appellant completed a Position Questionnaire and requested that
19 his position be reallocated from the Safety Professional II classification to an Ergonomist
20 classification.

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22 On August 29, 2001, Respondent concluded that Appellant's position was properly allocated to the
23 Safety Professional II classification. Respondent acknowledged that some of the duties performed
24 by Appellant were not specifically listed in the Safety Professional II classification. However,
25 Respondent found that the Higher Education class schema did not include a class that specifically
26 addressed the issue of ergonomics in the workplace.

1 On October 1, 2001, Appellant appealed CWU's decision to the Department of Personnel. The
2 Director's designee, Sandra Stewart, conducted an allocation review of Appellant's position and
3 forwarded the results of her review to Teri Thompson, Director of Classification and Compensation.
4 By letter dated March 26, 2002, Ms. Thompson notified Appellant that his position was properly
5 allocated to the Safety Professional II classification. On April 22, 2002, Appellant filed exceptions
6 to the Director's determination with the Personnel Appeals Board. Appellant's exceptions are the
7 subject of this proceeding.

8 Appellant is responsible for managing and directing the operation of the Ergonomics Program
9 within the Environmental Safety and Health Department at CWU. Appellant serves as the
10 departmental specialist on occupational ergonomic issues.

11
12 **Summary of Appellant's Argument.** Appellant contends that the Director's designee failed to
13 consider the typical work statements of the Safety Professional II classification and argues that the
14 duties he performs are not addressed in this classification or in the Safety Professional class series.
15 Appellant further argues that the Safety Professional classifications address the issues of work place
16 health and safety while the focus of his position is to address workplace productivity. Appellant
17 contends that his duties and responsibilities do not best fit within the Safety Professional II
18 classification. In his appeal and during his argument before the Board, Appellant did not identify
19 the Higher Education classification to which he feels his position should be reallocated.

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21 **Summary of Respondent's Argument.** Respondent acknowledges that Appellant's duties and
22 responsibilities are not specifically addressed in the Safety Professional II classification. However,
23 Respondent asserts that there were no existing classifications in the Higher Education classification
24 plan that specifically incorporated the functions of Appellant's position. Respondent argues that the
25 Appellant's position needed to be allocated to an existing classification. Therefore, Respondent
26

1 contends that on a best-fit basis, Appellant's position was allocated to the Safety Professional II
2 classification

3 **Primary Issue.** Whether the Director's determination that Appellant's position was properly
4 allocated to the Safety Professional II classification should be affirmed.
5

6 **Relevant Classifications.** Safety Professional II, class code 2688.
7

8 **Decision of the Board.** The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best
9 describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a
10 measurement of the volume of work performed nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that
11 work is performed. Also, a position review is not a comparison of work performed by employees in
12 similar positions. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular
13 position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the
14 class which best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. Liddle-Stamper v.
15 Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

16 All parties agree that no classification in the Higher Education classification plan specifically
17 describes the duties and responsibilities of Appellant's position. Therefore, the question here is
18 which of the available classifications best describes the **overall** nature and scope of his position.
19

20 The class series concept for the Safety Professional classification series states: "Plan and
21 implement accident prevention programs as a component of environmental health and safety
22 activities for protection of employees, students, and visitors." The focus of Appellant's position is
23 to plan and implement an ergonomic program as a component of the Environmental Safety and
24 Health Department at CWU to improve the productivity of employees. While the outcomes of
25 protecting employees and improving their productivity are different, the nature of the work is
26 similar.

1 In Allegrì v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. ALLO-96-0026 (1998), the Board
2 addressed the concept of best fit. The Board noted that while the appellant's duties and
3 responsibilities did not encompass the full breadth of the duties and responsibilities described by the
4 classification to which his position was allocated, on a best fit basis, the classification best
5 described the level, scope and diversity of the overall duties and responsibilities of his position.

6 The nature of Appellant's duties and responsibilities are consistent with Safety Professional
7 classification. Appellant develops and administers a comprehensive ergonomic program for CWU.
8 Appellant is not assigned supervisory or lead responsibilities. He independently carries out the
9 functions of his position under the general direction of the Environmental Health and Safety
10 Manager. The level, scope and breadth of Appellant's position best fits the Safety Professional II
11 classification.

12
13 **Conclusion.** Appellant's appeal on exceptions should be denied and the determination of the
14 Director, dated March 26, 2002, should be affirmed.

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16 **ORDER**

17 NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by Appellant is
18 denied and the Director's determination, dated March 26, 2002, is affirmed and adopted.

19 DATED this _____ day of _____, 2002.

20
21 WASHINGTON STATE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

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23 _____
Gerald L. Morgen, Vice, Chair

24
25 _____
René Ewing, Member

26
Personnel Appeals Board
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Olympia, Washington 98504